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## 'TIS AN ILL WIND THAT BLOWS NOBODY GOOD.'

This proverb was forcibly brought to my remembrance when, a short time ago, I found myself the inmate of a tiny lodging, so close to the edge of the sea that I had opportunity of observing every action of the tides, every movement of the human beings who came either to enjoy the influence of the sea-breezes, or to make their living by any of the various means which offer themselves to those who live by the sea-side.

It had been brilliant and lovely weather, more like June than October; and the sea, of glassy smoothness, and reflecting every tint of the heavens on its bosom, had been more beautiful in its dreamlike stillness than words can express. Then came one of those sudden changes which are so often encountered on our coasts in the autumn; a strong easterly gale set in, with squalls of rain; the wild tempestuous wind came pouring over the sea, and lashing its mighty waters into madness, causing them to flow, 'rolling in foaming billows,' far, far above their accustomed bounds, and to cover the sands, and even a great part of the greenward above them, with creamy foam. It was from a cottage on Paington Sands, the exact centre of Torbay, that I watched this scene; and any one who is acquainted with that part of the Devonshire coast, will be aware that an easterly wind has great power in this otherwise sheltered haven. The bay, which is contained between the two fine promontories, Berry Head to the south, and Hope's Nose to the north, opens directly east; and between these two headlands, which are from six to seven miles apart, the waters pour in when the wind blows from that quarter with such force as is never experienced there in any other wind.

Torquay, that place of refuge for consumptive patients, is safely nestled under the northern hilly promontory; but the opposite shore, and especially that point of which I speak, Paington, receives the full force of an easterly storm. It was spring-tides, and for three successive days, as the waters rose, the waves swept wildly over the sunken rocks, then flowed onwards for a moment, and being anew dashed on high by the obstruction formed by the wall of the little pier, rose in a sheet of spray, washing over the whole fabric of the pier, and clearing away, as it retired, every loose rope or other articles that had been left on that usually safe resting-place.

On the third night came thunder—'that deep and dreadful organ-pipe;' and broad sheets of blue lightning blazing across the heavens and over the sea, lighted up every wave with glittering splendour. But nature will assert her claims, even in the face of

the most grand and brilliant spectacles; so after watching the progress of the storm for a considerable time, I grew cold and weary, and shutting the window, went to bed and to sleep. The next morning early, before I dressed, I drew back my blind to observe the state of the sea and of the weather. What a scene did I behold! How entirely different from that of the night before; the sea lay as calm and placid as a lake—there was scarcely a ripple on its surface. Not a sign was there of the elemental strife which had raged for the three previous days; and the little wavelets which broke on the shore left but a mere strip of white spray, as if just to mark where sea ended and wet sand began—a needful mark, for the sunbeams lit up every object with such beaming lustre, that sand and water were almost equally shining and glittering with light.

The whole beach was alive with the poorer inhabitants of the place, come out to gather in their harvest—to collect the 'good' which this to them not 'ill wind' had brought. I was myself not at all aware of the many sources of profit which are derived by the inhabitants of a sea-side village from a storm; and it may not be uninteresting to some who have not had the opportunities of observation, which this equinoctial gale afforded me, to hear a little on the subject.

The first and most prominent groups which attracted my notice were composed of men, six or seven in a party, who were busily employed in raking something from the waters. Each had a rake with a very long handle, and strong iron teeth, of four or five inches in length. They were securing for manure the masses of the larger algae, which floated in immense quantities on the water. For about two hours after high-water they were thus employed; the quantity they collected was enormous, but nothing to compare with what the ebbing waters bore back again, to be cast ashore at other places, or to return to that beach at another time. The men raked it just so far as to be out of reach of the waves, then placing it in mounds, went off to other toil. For the few hours it lay there, I amused myself with examining the heaps, which consisted chiefly of the larger tangle—that broad olive-green weed we so often find on the shore, with immensely long and broad fronds, the margins waved as if they had been frilled; and of the broad flat-leaved laminaria, with its yellowish inflated air-vessels, terminating each forked extremity. These had been uprooted from the rocks by the force of the waves, and had borne away with them clusters of mussels, which still, moored by their long and strong fibrous filaments, kept their position, closely packed together, as they had been lying in the mussel-beds from which they had been torn. I took home a root or two of weed,

and put them in a vessel of sea-water, in the hope of seeing the mussels open. In this hope I was disappointed; but I found after a day or two that I had unawares secured many treasures, of which I shall speak hereafter.

Towards mid-day came throngs of people—men, women, and children—with carts and horses to remove the valuable heaps of weed, before the returning tide should again scatter them; but there was far too much to be carried further than just out of reach of danger, in case the storm should again set in; so it was collected into one heap—and a huge one it was—on the green, and many days passed before the whole quantity was finally carried away.

Before the weed-rakers were gone, a new scene was begun. I saw two or three places on the beach where many dozens of people were assembled, digging in the sand, and carting off something, I knew not what. There were men with huge hampers, into which they were throwing something which they picked up by the handful, and men and women, boys and girls, all with baskets collecting. I hastened to the spot, at about the centre of the sands, where the largest group was assembled, and the extraordinary scene that met my view baffles description. The whole ground was entirely covered with different kinds of shell-fish; the men dug deep into the sand, or rather, I should say, into the heaps of mollusks—for there was little of the former in comparison with the latter—and threw them up by the shovelful. Cart-loads, dozens of cart-loads of cockles of several kinds, razor-fish, mussels, and other species of edible bivalves, lay in all directions, mixed with whelks, small crabs, and an infinity of small shells, some empty and some with the fish in them. Each person seemed to have enough to do to collect the object of which he or she was in search; for although some of the people filled their baskets indiscriminately with various kinds of wares, the greater number seemed to have a single definite object. Two boys were intent on filling a large basket with what are vulgarly called 'razor-fish,' a pursuit in which I found some pleasure in helping them, by pointing out the creatures where they lay, and poking in the sand with my walking-stick, or turning over the heaps in search of them; and 'Here's one,' and 'Here's another, and another,' was echoed from mouth to mouth, till in a few minutes the great brown basket was full to overflowing. This mollusk (*Solen siliqua*) is the inhabitant of those long porcelain-like shells which are so often found empty on the sea-shore, but which seldom are taken with their inmates, except after a storm, or by those who know how to look for them. The shells are six or seven times longer than their breadth, partly coated with a thin olive-green epidermis; but where this does not prevail, they are, like china, white and smooth, beautifully waved, and lined with buff and purple. The shell is sharp at the edge, whence, in conjunction with its shape, it is called razor-shell, and by the French, *manche de couteau*. An interesting little book, *Common Things of the Sea-coast*, gives so pleasing an account of the habits of this creature, that I cannot do better than transcribe it as it stands: 'The animal is provided with a cylindrical foot, admirably adapting it for burrowing in the sand. This organ tapers at the end, and is, however, shaped more like a *tongue* than a *foot*. Destitute of a cable to moor it, or a strong shell to protect it, this little foot supplies all the needs of the mollusk; and the depth into which, by its help, the animal can retreat into the sand, is truly wonderful. It often buries itself several feet below the surface, rendering its capture scarcely possible. When about to enter the sand, the foot of the

solen takes the form of a shovel, with a sharp-pointed end. With this it digs a hole, turning its point into the form of a hook, to facilitate its descent, and again widening it into the spade-like shape, to shovel away the sand. If it wishes to remove to a little distance, the solen can double up its leg into the form of a ball, which prevents it from slipping back, while the action of powerful muscles impels it forward. Supplied with so admirable an organ, the solen is by no means an easy capture; and buried upright in the sand, the fishermen who catch them need both skill and practice.'

This species, the *Solen siliqua*, is much in request for food in Ireland: it is taken at high-tide by pushing a long wire, bent and sharpened at one end, suddenly into the little hollows in the sand which mark the spot where the fish lies; this passes between the valves, and the barbed part fixes in the animal, which is thus brought to the surface. Professor Forbes says: 'They are among the most delicious of shell-fish when properly cooked—broiling is the best method—and are eaten in many parts of Britain, as well as abroad.' This is his report of the whole solen family. My little dirty boys were, therefore, it would seem, skilled gastronomists, or else sent out by those who were so; for I observed that they cast aside all the other varieties of mollusks which lay around them, selecting only these razor-fish. One of them, however, picked up one of a kind of cockle, very abundant on the shore, called red noses. 'You do not eat these?' said I inquiringly. 'Ees we does,' was the answer, as the young gentleman tore open the shell, and to my dismay proceeded to bite off the coral-red foot of the living fish, and eat it with great glee!

These cockles (*Cardium rusticum*, or, as some authors name it, *Tuberculatum*) lay among the other relics of the storm in thousands and tens of thousands; the people were loading carts with them and others, to sell for manure, and dozens of people carrying them off in baskets for hours; yet the number did not seem to be decreased, for there they lay in heaped ridges at the different tide-marks for days afterwards—their scarlet-fish and brown shells quite colouring the beach. Thousands were carried back to the sea by the retreating waves, and for two or three days pigs were grubbing about amongst the shells, and feeding voraciously on the half-decomposed animals; yet still nearly a week after the storm many thousands remained. I took home a couple of them, and kept them for a day or two in a plate of sand and water. They are very curious and beautiful. The shell is brown, and filled with prickly tubercles on the ribs; white and polished in the inside. Round the edge of both the upper and under shell is laid an edging of fleshy substance, of a soft orange red, beautifully toothed; this is part of the mantle; and at one side are two tubes, with little fibre-like fringes, which form the breathing-apparatus of the fish. The foot, of which I have spoken, is long, and of a very brilliant red, exceedingly like a piece of solid coral, fleshy and shining, and bending like an elbow about the middle; with this the animal scoops a hole in the sand, wherein to bury itself in time of danger, and with it also it is able to disinter itself at pleasure. To do this, or if it wishes to move forward or backward on the sand, it thrusts out this foot, then doubles it up, pushing downwards towards the sand, and then jerks itself strongly in the direction it wishes; or on occasion, it can leap high into the air by the same process. Forbes says: 'As a British species, it is essentially local, and by no means frequent in collections. These shells, however, abound at certain seasons.' He quotes further from Turton: 'On the Paington Sands, in Torbay, where at low spring-tides they may be observed with the fringed tubes appearing just above the surface, the neighbouring cottagers gather them in baskets and panniers, and after cleansing them a few hours in cold spring-water, fry the fish in a batter made of

crumbs of bread, producing a wholesome and savoury dish. The inhabitants call them red noses.'

Immense quantities of mussels were cast ashore, but to my surprise, I did not see a single one picked up, though I believe it to be the same species (*Mytilus edulis*) of which such incredible numbers are eaten in Edinburgh and other places. Dr Knapp states, according to Forbes: 'As an article of food, there cannot be used fewer than ten bushels per week in Edinburgh and Leith for forty weeks in the year—in all, 400 bushels annually. Each bushel of mussels, when shelled, and freed from all refuse, will probably contain from three to four pints of the animals, or about 900 or 1000, according to their size. Taking the latter number, there will be consumed in Edinburgh and Leith about 400,000 mussels.' He proceeds to calculations of the numbers used for bait, and shews that 30,000,000 or 40,000,000 mussels are used yearly in the district of the Firth of Forth alone. He says also, that the best are got north of the pier at Newhaven, and sell for about 8d. per bushel, and that the beds are private property; nay, that in many places they are kept in artificial beds, called 'mussel-gardens.' We have heard of cockle-shells in a garden in the nursery song:

How does my lady's garden grow?  
With cockle-shells and silver bells,  
And pretty maids all in a row;

but never before of mussel-gardens. However, Torbay is certainly full of mussel-beds, though no one seems ever to gather the fruit.

Besides the red-noses, which I have described, there were two other kinds of cockle in large quantities on the beach—one much larger, containing also a red fish, and its shell spiny; and another considerably smaller, and devoid of spines.

Besides the weed-collectors, the parties gathering mollusks in general for manure, and those picking them up with more careful discrimination for food, there were many with baskets gathering the small lumps of coal which had been washed from the different wharfs by the lashing of the waters; and many a good fire was no doubt maintained that day from this fuel, and the bits of sticks and chips which had been sent afloat in the same or other ways. Thank God! there was nothing that looked like the portions of boat or ship; no broken timbers or dead bodies came ashore to damp the enjoyment of this marine-harvesting: all was sunshine and glee—all 'good,' and no 'ill.'

I had my own particular 'good' from the effects of this wild wind. What a harvest is such a time for the zoologist, or marine botanist! and even for one who, without having a claim to either of these respectable names, has a right to that of a lover of nature and natural objects.

I have said that from the root of sea-weed in which the mussels were clustered, several interesting objects were procured. One of these was a species of diminutive 'sand-star,' of which there were not less than five or six specimens washed out all alive, and writhing their long arms about with great energy. These creatures were none of them above half an inch in expansion, each possessing five arms, radiating from a round imbricated centre. These arms are flexible and jointed, furnished with spines and membranous tentacula. There was also a curious annelid, of which at least a dozen specimens appeared: a long thread-like worm it was, which, under a small magnifier, appeared as if it were yellowish-white, spotted with black. It was furnished with an immense number of bristles, arranged along the side, which served the creature as instruments of progression, and by means of which it writhed about and climbed up the sides of the glass in which it was placed with wonderful ease. Another animal, of which I obtained three specimens from the same source, greatly delighted me. No doubt,

a true naturalist would have known what it was at a glance; but I did not, nor have I found it described or delineated in any of the works I have consulted. Examining the vessel one day in which my ever-increasing treasures were placed, I perceived a sort of net-work of almost imperceptibly thin silky-looking fibres, not at all thicker than the finest silk-worm silk, wrapped over the bottom of the glass. I watched them for a minute or two, and saw that they were in motion; and on further inspection, found that they proceeded from two tubular cases of soft substance, each about three-quarters of an inch long; one was green, one yellow, and both not unlike in form to the tubular spur-shaped petal of the columbine, only that they were not so much knobbed or carved at the end, and less wide at the mouth. The yellow hair-like processes were fully an inch and a half extended from the mouths of these tubes, closely intermixed, so as to form one net, and of immense number. I gently agitated the water, and touched the threads with the feather-end of a pen, on which they instantly contracted, and the animals presented the appearance of such a torch as we see depicted in representations of Hymen; the filaments waving with most graceful movements from the mouth of the tube of each insect, and forming a thick flame-like tassel of rich amber colour. These filaments were all tentacula; and by means of them the creatures were able to inflate their bodies with water, and spring suddenly with a graceful, but most eccentric movement, to the top of the water—a feat they were continually performing, rising suddenly with their plumes depressed into a mass, and a wriggling motion of the body, and then as suddenly dropping in a winding direction to the bottom, their beautiful hair-like tentacula floating out on the water in a most interesting and peculiar manner. I afterwards found a third and smaller specimen in the same cluster of weeds. These pretty and graceful things I kept for a fortnight, watching them daily with great pleasure.

No doubt, had I had a microscope of sufficient power, I should have discovered many more objects of interest in this vase; but as I had not, I was obliged to go further afield for my observations, not half of which, however, will space allow me to record. In the drift-heaps, I found, amongst other curious things, two varieties of 'cross-fish,' or, as they are sometimes called, star-fish, of the *Asteriade* family. One was the common cross-fish (*Craster rubens*), the other (*Asterias aurantiaca*) the bat-thorn. The former of these has five rounded, tapering, fleshy rays, surrounding a disk at equal distances, and covered with blunt spines. It is variable in tint, ranging from deep-yellow to scarlet. Under each ray is an avenue of short, whitish cylindrical tentacula or suckers, possessed of great powers of retraction. The other species was more light and elegant in form, its rays being narrower, and very regularly arranged; the colour, a light drab; and the surface of the disk and rays so closely set with tubercles crowded with minute spines, so as to give a firm compactness to the whole, quite different from the former species. All round the edges, the rays were studded with a row of bead-like protuberances, which formed an exceedingly accurate and beautiful border to the upper part of the animal, marking the regularity of the star very curiously. I found several specimens of each of these genera. It is said that the fishermen in some localities have a strange superstition about the bat-thorn. 'The first taken is carefully made a prisoner, and placed on a seat at the stern of the boat. When they hook a but (halibut), they immediately give the poor star-fish its liberty, and commit it to its native element; but if their fishing is unsuccessful, it is left to perish.' This species inhabits deep water, and is usually dredged up from sandy ground. Star-fishes are often found feeding on shell-fish; they wrap their arms round their prey, and 'suck the fish out of its shell with their mouths,

poking out the lobes of the stomach. They can project the central parts of their stomachs in the manner of a proboscis.' In Cornwall, some of these creatures are called 'clam-fish,' and some people call them 'dead-men's-hands,' others, 'five-fingers.'

Plenty of the empty shells of the heart-urchins (*Amphidotus cordatus*) were washed up, denuded of their beautiful spines, but exhibiting the small orifices in the shell from which the suckers of the animal, when in life, were protruded; these form a curious sort of pattern on the otherwise solid shell. The woman where I was lodging assured me that these shells were gulls' eggs, and that the gulls dropped them on the water! I found one lovely little specimen of the sea-egg (*Echinus sphaera*), a delicately beautiful and curious object, alive, and its multitude of brittle spines all erect; but these creatures are so fragile, that before I could get it home, the greater part of the spines had been rubbed off. The shell of the sea-egg is spherical, but flattened at both ends. It is completely covered with tubercles, arranged longitudinally, in regular rows, to which are affixed the spines; 'most wonderfully suited,' says the author I have before quoted, Miss Pratt, 'to the wants of the living creature within the cell, is the structure of these spines. No rock is so smooth or so rugged but that by their help the animal can make its way. Its meal lies before it among the rocks; the zoophytes, the shell-fish, the crabs, are all welcome prey; nor are they longed for in vain. To look at it, it would appear a mere ball, incapable of attacking or of seizing any living thing that had limbs wherewith to walk away, or fins by means of which it could glide out of its presence. Not so; it can climb to places where animals which seem better fitted for locomotion would find access impossible. Casd in a coat-of-mail, and furnished with hundreds of spines, which serve as legs, the ball moves gently onwards. If an approaching enemy gives notice of danger, it can either withdraw behind some nook, or with the spine dig a hole in the sand, and lie there till it is past. Besides the spines, countless suckers aid the progress; suckers which, like those on the star-fish, emerge from the calcareous case, and which are as long as the spines themselves. These suckers are like little feet, and adhere firmly to rocks, and serve, too, as means of offence and defence to the animal; for if the crab or fish is touched by them, the touch proves fatal, and the victim is at once dragged to the mouth and devoured.' Its mouth is an aperture, round which is a fleshy ring set with very sharp teeth, and jaws acted on by powerful muscles, which enable it to bite through hard substances.

One other object, and but one, must I notice of the many beautiful and curious things which formed my portion of that day's spoil—and that is the sea-mouse (*Aphrodita aculeata*). This strange little animal certainly ranks more with the curious than the beautiful, unless we except the long silky hairs, of every hue of the rainbow, with which parts of it are covered. The animals, of which I found two, are from three to four inches long, tapering at both ends, and about an inch thick; queer-looking creatures, the first of which, as I found it lying amongst the weeds, I at first took for an old brush; and it was not till I more closely inspected it, that I perceived that the stiff bristly black hairs, which are arranged in tufts along each side, belonged to a living animal. These black bristles surrounded little fleshy protuberances, which are the breathing-tubes of the animal; and the coloured hairs, which were indeed most beautiful, seem to be a mere clothing, though they may have some function to perform of which I was not aware.' This animal is of the order *Annelata*—a term suggesting the general form, which is that of a series of rings.

Truly, it is 'an ill wind that blows nobody good;' and it will be long before I forget the lesson which

those days at Paington taught me, or lose the pleasant recollections of the interesting contrast afforded by the raging billows and the lightning flash, succeeded by the glorious calm blue summer-like sea and the joyous outpouring of the villagers.

## M A R E T I M O .

### CHAPTER X.

ANGELA.

We have already, by implication, conveyed to the reader an idea of how Angela had spent the sad time of her separation from Paolo. At first the Marchese Belmonte, by violence and threats, had endeavoured to tear from her a public denial of the marriage, which yet everybody knew had taken place. For his own part, he affected to disbelieve it utterly, pretending that his daughter, by false representations, or even, as he insinuated, for the benefit of credulous Sicily, by magical incantations, had been led into a sentimental correspondence with the young heir of Di Falco—who did not love her, but sought merely to gratify hereditary hatred. Day by day he announced that her illusion was dispersing, that she was almost ready to confirm his testimony, that she was withheld only by false shame. But the public declaration did not come; and even intimate friends began to use the expression 'Angela's recantation' as synonymous with 'the Greek Kalends.' Then the marchese, baffled by a will equally powerful with his own, though manifesting itself in more gentle forms, amidst tears and supplications, as firm as steel, even when she lay at his feet, bathing them in tears, her hair dishevelled, a suppliant with the spirit of a martyr—this father, whose love became auxiliary to his violence, for he really believed that his daughter's happiness was as deeply wounded as his own pride—resolved, perhaps because some bitter moments of compunction came to him at times, to trust the task of coercion to other hands, and to remain alone in that palace of Messina, feeding on his anger and disappointment.

Angela arrived at the Villa Corsini in a mood of mind hostile to its owner, to whom she did not admit the right of surveillance over her sentiments and actions. To her father's authority she yielded, until required to sacrifice not only her affections but her duty. Had it been put forth before her marriage, with all its cruel and passionate claims to absolute disposal of her life and fortunes, probably she would have bent before it. There were times, indeed, when poignant regret came to her that she had entered upon womanly existence in the midst of a romantic episode, carrying out completely, in her ignorance of the world and its duties and obligations, the sentimental aspirations of every school-girl; unconsciously allowing a very faithful but very uninstructed servant—poor Lisa, whom she was not allowed now to see—to assist in modelling her life rather according to a theatrical than a practical theory; and hastening, it could not be denied, with blameable self-love, to meet the happiness without the responsibilities and the public sanction of matronhood. 'After all,' she sometimes thought, 'do a few whispered words, in the presence of trembling witnesses, in defiance of family tradition, apart from the smiles of a parent, and where public applause and consent could not penetrate—do these words constitute the blessing that makes me a wife?' So far, in her sceptical moods, did

she go; but then the remembrance of Paolo, whose whole soul to its very innermost depths had been laid open to her, and who had absorbed her, as it were, in his being, rose up. She saw him for a time as he used to come with swift step to their moonlight meetings; but then he was borne suddenly away, and stood afar off, on a bleak point overlooking the raging sea, beckoning to her in despair, or lying pale and down-cast on the damp floor of a dungeon. These apparitions that peopled her slumbers, did not abandon her in her waking-hours. They never failed to convince her that her faint-heartedness was blamable, and that, the die being cast, she was bound to live faithful to the memory of Paolo—dead to her in his prison-tomb.

The intimate meditations of this young wife, who, as her early actions tell, was prone by nature to seek the enjoyment of the present hour, to substitute the impulses of her own heart for the lessons of worldly wisdom which she had heard without learning, to fly into the embraces of experience as the moth does to the candle, because of its brightness; her thoughts and hopes, and fears and doubts, and hesitations—the alternations of petulant despair and meek resignation; the moments when she felt moved to bruise her bosom against the bars of her cage, or shrank mentally, almost to the loss of reason, from the fearful prospect of a whole life spent in mourning over a flash of joy—moments that soon became of rarer occurrence; the gradual process by which she rose to the level of her position, taught herself at anyrate to conceal the agitations that sometimes still disturbed her—learned to look not only without terror, but even with hope, to the future—the history of this education in sorrow, accomplished silently, without scandal, without useless scenes of reproach and anger, would be too long to relate. Suffice it to say, that Angela, having at length brought herself to believe that, despite all impediments, the time of consolation would come sooner or later—perhaps whilst youth was still bright, certainly when calm and meditative age found them abandoned by the enemies of their happiness—that Angela having acquired a fanatical confidence in this future, when she had been assured more than once on former occasions by the Princess Corsini that Paolo was dead, she merely answered by a smile of incredulity, that soon changed into one of confident hope.

The princess had all the prejudices of her brother, and believed as firmly as he did that the secret marriage of her niece was an ineffaceable stain on the family. Better versed, however, in the character of her sex, she soon understood that Angela had loved once for all; that it was impossible to shake her faith in Paolo; and that she would ever consider herself his until persuaded of his death. The marchese, more violent and unreasonable, had entertained hopes that the marriage, in the absence of certain formalities, might be broken by the forced consent of both husband and wife; and although the story, to his infinite grief and anger, had become known far and wide in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, he did not abandon until very late the idea of a more honourable establishment for his daughter. It was only by degrees that he was brought to consent provisionally, that if Angela remained obstinate in rebellion, means should be taken to induce her to enter a convent—not at first, he stipulated, as a novice, but as a guest. The Princess Corsini after this, troubled herself very little about his views; and being old, and idle, and proud, made it the business of her life to conquer the resistance of her niece, growing warm, like a gambler, in the contest, forgetting even the motives that at the outset actuated her, and fitting

her measures exactly to the amount of resistance she encountered. There is no more terrible struggle than that of two feminine wills; and the woman who defends her happiness is but a trifle stronger than the woman who first obeys her pride, and then seeks victory for victory itself.

The Padre Maximo was, as we have seen, but the half-conscious instrument in the last grand attempt to shake the confidence and hope of Angela. He believed that several false reports of the death of Paolo had been communicated by the princess, and been treated with indifference; but though he went through moments of doubt, he hesitated to admit the possibility that the Bishop of Trapani, long revered for his mild piety, would consent to write a deliberate untruth. Nor would the bishop perhaps have done so, but for the presence of his nephew Luigi, whose endeavours to force him to join in a conspiracy made him only the more anxious to please the powers existent. His letter, based on information derived from the commandant of Maretime, which he would not take the trouble of examining, was dated the day previous to the arrival of Walter and the departure of Luigi.

Angela was sitting in a retired room, in a distant part of the villa, when the padre, after his interview with the princess, overheard by Walter and Mr Buck, went to break to her the sad tidings contained in the bishop's letter. A lamp, placed on a small table of white marble, threw a bright light on the piece of embroidery on which her fingers were busy, whilst her mind was far away, hovering over the surf-encircled island of Maretime. Paolo would have found her much changed had he been permitted to watch her in secret, whilst her countenance was not lighted by that glance of undying youth which first assured him of her love, and which she had promised should always be ready to greet him, no matter what ravage years might commit upon her features. People often talk as of a wonderful thing, that some rare old couples, from whom all beauty of form has vanished, should still continue to gaze at each other with admiration; but, in truth, they have never ceased to behold what at first charmed them. Wrinkles, visible to bystanders, are not visible to them. Indeed, they never saw the material lines, which have always some defect, but only an image cast into their minds, they know not how, and which remains unchanged, as if by some magical trick the shadow of a tree in deep water should persist in all the loveliness of spring the summer through, and even in autumn, when the real leaves are shed upon the breeze. There is not much mystery in this if we think well of it. The shape we really love is but the symbol of a soul; and whilst the soul varies not in its devotion, we have no leisure to mark the progress by which the body advances towards decay.

Angela, as we have said, was changed even in one year; but whilst losing some of the graces that had lingered about her from childhood—some of the tints, fresh and bright as those of an infant's cheek that has lain too long and too closely against its mother's breast—some of that heavenly purity of the eye which speaks of a soul never yet disturbed by too great joy or sorrow—though her countenance was not that of one in the dewy dawn of life, watching cheerfully for the rising sun, yet perhaps she was more truly beautiful then, as she sat with her heart full of memories and regrets, than when first she won the love of Paolo. There is a kind of sorrow that seems to sanctify the human frame, to purify it from the earthliness that clings to youth and happiness, however lovely. The Padre Maximo, as he stood in the half-open doorway and gazed, thought that it was well this spiritual thing was no longer bound to the world by any chain, and rejoiced almost that one word would bring her, humbled and bruised, to his feet, imploring him to take her away to what he really believed was the ante-chamber of Paradise, the waiting-

room of eternal joy—the Convent of the Assumption at Castellamare.

She was not much surprised to see him standing there, although his pallid face contrasted more than usual with his black garments, and his eyes were full of pity—the menace of those who suffer, but have hope. She rose to meet him; but he led her back to her chair, and remained silent. He had prepared many words of consolation, such as those by which the prudent are accustomed to usher in evil tidings; but they fled away from his memory, and he stood long by Angela's chair holding her hand. She understood partly; for at length, hanging down her head, she said in an anxious voice:

'You have something to tell me.'

The padre placed the bishop's letter in her hand, and looked towards the doorway, not to witness her first start of anguish. He beheld the princess standing on the threshold with folded arms, contemplating the scene triumphantly; and a strange suspicion came again to him, that he was perhaps the bearer of a falsehood.

Then rose that fearful cry that rushed through the villa, and was heard, if any were abroad, far out in the fields.

Angela fell against the padre, as if life had quite forsaken her, and then down upon the floor—not in one of those languid swoons that give time for the sufferer to take a graceful attitude, but like a mere inanimate thing that is never to move again. Her face lay upon the marble; one hand was pressed to her heart, as if she had been stabbed there; the other was outstretched, convulsively clutching the fatal letter.

'Our first care must be to send for a doctor,' said the princess, whilst calmly taking the most necessary preliminary steps to bring back Angela to consciousness.

'I will despatch Andrea at once to the village,' murmured the padre, who felt, and indeed looked, as if he had committed murder.

He was glad to be out of the room, and hastened, feeling his way, down to the hall, where Andrea and several women-servants were standing in a frightened group, believing that they had heard the voice of a spirit. At sight of the poor priest, whose face was livid as that of a corpse, they all crossed themselves, and crowded back from him. But he was soon reconciled.

'Go, Andrea,' said he, 'to the house of Dottore Pizzo; tell him you come from me; and that he must leave all other duties, and be here at once.'

The serving-man hesitated. He was smitten by a superstitious terror, and could not believe that the sound he had heard was the voice of a human being in pain or in trouble.

'The night is dark,' he muttered, looking forth through a broad window on the great mass of trees that surrounded the house; 'and Maria here thinks she has seen strange forms gliding to and fro near the avenue.'

The padre instantly understood that he must be the bearer of his own message. At anyrate, he could not resign himself to put the old man to the torture of superstitious fear by forcing him abroad in that mood of mind.

'Give me the key of the park-gate,' said he, 'and I will go myself. Besides, it is true that my words will have more weight with the doctor, who does not like to be disturbed at this hour, and would perhaps not wake up sufficiently to understand you.'

Andrea, though he felt ashamed of his cowardice, gave the key, and led the good priest to the front entrance.

'I would accompany you to the gate,' quoth he hesitating; 'but you know the way, and—I should have to come back alone.'

All the women declared that they should die of fright if Andrea went.

'Besides,' said the priest, chiding them, 'instead of being foolish here, you should be assisting your mistress to recover the Lady Angela.'

They let him out, and all went in a body to ascertain what was the matter, and offer their tardy aid.

The padre had not proceeded many steps down the avenue before he distinguished in the gloom two figures coming towards him. Despite his courage and confidence, we cannot be surprised that his heart seemed to leap into his throat.

'It is the priest alone,' whispered Mr Buck. 'Could there be a better chance?'

Walter instantly spoke in a cheering voice: 'Good father,' said he, 'be not alarmed; continue your journey: we are not robbers, but friends.'

'How came you here?' replied the padre, not quite reassured, but advancing, as he was directed, down the avenue.

'Is the Lady Angela in danger?' inquired Walter.

'Of her life, stranger, though it cannot interest you.'

'Be not sure of that, father. But tell me first, since the news smote her down, has she spoken?'

The padre stopped full in the midst of the avenue, and began to cross himself. Who could these people be, who knew so well at once what had taken place in a retired chamber of the villa?

'I do not know who you may be,' he faltered.

'You shall know all, as we do. We know that you have been the unwilling bearer of false intelligence; that you have spoken of the death of Paolo di Falco, who yet is living.'

'Living! Then it is unnecessary for me to go to Annunziata. Indeed, if he be dead, it seems to me there can be no hope. If he be living, a word will cure her. Tell me what you know.'

They led the padre beneath the trees, and in brief hurried sentences explained how sorely he had been deceived, and admitted the object of their presence there. Actuated partly by his good feeling, partly by indignation at having been made the dupe of so abominable a scheme, the excellent priest became their accomplice at once.

'We must be cautious,' said he; 'but we must be energetic. There is no time to lose. Let us go and open the gate, and spend a little while more in talk. Then I will return with you, sir (addressing Walter), as if you were a foreign physician whom I had encountered by chance—the Dottore Pizzo being away. You will easily contrive to have speech of Angela. Your companion must keep away; but we shall probably want his services to-morrow. You say you have a letter to the Princess Corsini. Let him present it. Heaven forgive me if I am doing wrong! But this poor child must be rescued from the hands of her persecutors; and if evil come, let it fall on me.'

The plan suggested by the padre was the most feasible one that could be adopted, although Mr Buck, who had grown warm in the adventure, would have preferred some more active part at once. However, he resigned himself with a sigh, and promised to remain at the gate until his companion should return.

They went towards the house, where the substitution of Walter for the Dottore Pizzo excited no remark—was indeed scarcely noticed. Angela—who had not spoken since she had received the news that had struck her down, but who had recovered her senses partially, for she looked round with a stony gaze as if in search of some one—was lying on a couch, attended by the women; whilst the princess, frightened at what she had done, paced anxiously up and down the adjoining room, looking in now and then, but not daring to enter. Walter rapidly examined the ground; and then, after looking with unaffected earnestness at the beautiful patient, began by ordering every one to retire from her.

'What she wants is air, pure air,' he said, 'and perfect silence.'

The servant-maids were not sorry to go away; for each one had fifty ingenious surmises to communicate, and fifty questions to put to Andrea, who sat on the stairs outside, that he might not be left quite alone in a distant part of the house.

At a glance from Walter, the padre went into the next room, to engage the attention of the princess, and half-closed the door as he passed. Angela looked on Walter with a surprised and inquiring air. There was no time to lose. He bent towards her, and speaking low, but in clear measured accents, he said: 'Utter not a word, not a sound; but listen, and believe. You have been the victim of a conspiracy. Paolo lives, and has sent me to you.'

An expression darted across Angela's countenance, that revealed the passage of what may be called a pang of joy through her heart. Then she closed her eyes, and fainted again; but this time with a smile upon her lips.

'This is nothing,' said Walter to the princess, whom he called to his assistance. 'A little water will bring her to. There is no danger—none whatever.'

He watched the effect these words would have; and was scarcely surprised to find that the expression of womanly solicitude, which had taken place on the princess's countenance, instantly vanished and gave way to one of stern resolve. Once assured that there was no fear of death, this implacable woman reverted to her plan, when it seemed to have been broken off, and already in her mind pondered how she should communicate to her brother that Angela had been induced to abandon the world, and bury her sorrows in a convent. Perhaps she was eager to secure this recruit to the army of faith, as an atonement for some sin of her own formerly committed.

Walter was again left alone with Angela when she recovered; and although he would have thought it more prudent to defer further explanations until she was better able to bear them, he could not resist the mute supplication of her eyes. He spoke to her of Paolo long and enthusiastically—still in the same measured accents, which fell like dew upon Angela's wounded spirit. He endeavoured, then, to make her comprehend the necessity of concealing her new-born joy, and affecting a semblance of grief.

'How can I seem sad,' murmured Angela, pressing her hands to her bosom, 'when I have paradise here?'

Walter then explained to her, that they wished to remove her from that villa—she assented with smiles; to take her with them—still she assented; but when he talked of leaving her in some place of safety whilst they attempted the rescue of Paolo: 'No,' said she firmly; 'the first hour of his liberty must be the first hour of my joy. I will accompany you.'

They agreed that Mr Buck should present himself next day, and seek an interview with the princess. But Walter, as yet, did not see very clearly how he could take away Angela, without creating a great rumour in the country, which he wished to avoid. However, he trusted a good deal in the suggestions of the night, and not a little in those of the worthy padre.

The princess thought, perhaps, that the visit of the physician was somewhat prolonged, for she came into the room, and said rather stiffly: 'Perhaps it will be well to let her rest now; although you seem, Sir Stranger, to effect your cures by words.'

Walter was afraid that some suspicion had crossed her mind, and hastened to take his leave in company with the padre.

'Don't forget to draw the gate after you,' said Andrea, who still objected to go down the avenue at that hour.

'We shall not fail, my son,' said the priest. 'Good-night.'

Mr Buck was waiting eagerly for them at the gate. It seemed to him that they had been away several hours; and, indeed, it was now long past midnight. They had much still to say to each other; and the padre took them to his little house, situated under the shadow of the church, at the entrance of the village. He contrived to let them in without waking his servant. And they passed the remainder of the night debating what they should do.

The padre now proved himself to be of good counsel.

'Strictly speaking,' said he, 'we might go to-morrow to the villa, obtain sight of Angela, ask her to accompany us, and take her away, whether the princess pleased or not. The wife of Paolo has courage enough to play any part we bid her; and there is no one at the villa strong enough to resist. They have, indeed, never contemplated the necessity of using violence. Angela came here in obedience to her father's commands, and has remained, simply because it was indifferent to her where she abided, Paolo not being with her. If she had ever shewn the slightest wish to escape, coercive measures would perhaps have been taken; but there has never appeared any necessity. To-morrow, therefore, we might, as I have said, lead her away without any stratagem at all. This, however, would not suit my purpose. I cannot put myself, without absolute necessity, so openly in opposition to so powerful a family. Listen to my plan. Signor Buck must present that strange letter to-morrow. Let him speak to the princess as if he had heard a rumour of Paolo's death. She will be delighted to give him an interview with Angela. When he obtains it, let him suggest, as his own opinion, that nothing now remains but absolute retirement from the world. Angela will understand, and acquiesce. I will be there, and will find an opportunity to speak to the poor thing in secret. She will ask to be led immediately to Castellamare. The princess will order out her old carriage, and accompany her. I shall be there, but not as your accomplice. 'There is a spot where the road comes quite down to the edge of the water, and is not divided in any way from the beach; banditti have often stopped travellers there; and,' said the good priest, smiling maliciously, 'if two strong men, who have sailed in their boat faster than we have travelled, happen to be there, and insist on carrying off Angela, Andrea will remain on the box, the princess will storm, and I, not being a man of war, shall be able to do nothing but implore you to desist, which you, heretics that you are, of course will not do; and I shall not be sorry if you put me rather in fear of my life.'

The two friends laughed at this sketch of a plan of elopement, which, however, seemed feasible enough. They resolved to attempt it; and having slumbered for awhile in a couple of chairs, bade adieu to the padre, and hastened to their albergo. The hostess received them with good-natured reproaches. Mad Englishmen that they were, to spend the night wandering about the country, admiring dreary scenery, whilst the softest beds in all Italy had been prepared for their reception! They willingly admitted the absurdity of their proceedings, and did justice to a breakfast which, if not quite so delightful as the beds were supposed to be, extorted from them numerous compliments that quite won the hostess's heart.

Mr Buck went down to his boat, to give some necessary directions; and when the morning was sufficiently advanced to authorise a call, started to penetrate in his turn into that mysterious villa, which had begun to assume in his mind almost the character of an enchanted castle. He had never been engaged in any adventure so extraordinary before, and felt his breast swell with pride at finding himself an indispensable agent. Having recommended to him the utmost discretion, Walter, not caring to remain at the albergo, where a number of inquisitive people began to collect, went on board the cutter, pursued by several beggars, and pulling out a

little way, endeavoured to make the time seem short by the use of Mr Buck's fishing-tackle.

In all his life Walter Masterton never remembered so long a day as that. The sun seemed ever to remain poised in the same place, and the shadows of the hills were as motionless as marble blocks. Excepting the piece of coast near at hand, that rose abruptly and concealed the cone of Vesuvius, all the shores of the bay, which he gazed at over the waters trembling with light, appeared to be dim as the land we see in dreams. A few sails came gliding from various points, and then floated as it were stationary. Walter began to fear that there would not be breeze enough to take them to the point agreed upon, but the lads said they would row, if necessary. Time passed. At length it could not escape observation, that the day was far spent; for the sun hung over the entrance of the bay. Still there was no sign of Mr Buck. No messenger beckoned from the shore. Walter became uneasy. Had he misunderstood the plan? Had his companion been induced, to accompany the carriage? Had it passed; and was Angela, believing herself betrayed, already in sight of the sombre walls of the convent? Had the priest faltered? All these questions, and many more, tormented him, until the sun sank so far, that the brilliance which had hitherto been shed over the whole scene gradually withdrew, and seemed to collect in one glow towards the west.

At length Mr Buck appeared on the shore, beckoning anxiously to be taken on board. They shipped the oars, and rowed in at once.

'All right?' inquired Walter anxiously.

'All right. They have started already, and all depends now on our finding them alone at the bottom of the hill. The padre is a brick.'

Mr Buck, who was in a state of great enthusiasm and delight, related, as they got under-way, that the letter of Bianca—especially as he accompanied it by stating plumply that at Messina everybody talked of Paolo's death—caused him to be received with the highest honours by the princess, and led at once to an interview with Angela. Matters passed exactly as the padre had anticipated, except that the young wife, though prepared for this visit, was overcome for a time by the excessive earnestness with which Mr Buck played his part, and actually fainted again. The padre, however, soon took an opportunity of restoring the tranquillity of her mind, and let her into the whole secret of his plan. Thenceforward she allowed herself to be guided like a child, or rather entered into the intrigue as if it had been a mere sport. Love taught her dissimulation. Her request to be instantly taken to the convent, that she might intomb her sorrows there, was, said Mr Buck, a consummate piece of acting.

'These women,' quoth he, 'even the best of them, are dangerous creatures. 'Tis no wonder that I deceived her—I am a man of the world; but 'pon honour, even knowing what I did, she deceived me. I was on the point of upbraiding her, and of saying: "Madam, what will your husband think of this?" However, I soon remembered all about it; hoped she would never have occasion really to conceal anything from Mr Paolo, for I defy him or anybody else to guess her thoughts; and then submitted during three mortal hours—three whole hours and a quarter, sir, by my watch—to be preached to by the Princess Corsini, who nourished the vain hope of converting me to her faith by all manner of ingenious arguments and learned citations. She is a very eloquent woman, but if ever I were to become a missionary, I should take lessons from the padre, not from her.'

Walter did not pay much attention to Mr Buck's account of his controversy with the princess. He was too much absorbed in anxious calculations, the results of which the slightest accident might derange. Between

Annunziata and Castellamare the coast describes a great curve, at the centre of which was the spot where the padre had given them a rendezvous. Before they had traversed half the distance, darkness had come on. The moon, though already up, was shrouded in white clouds. Very irregular was the motion of the boat; for the wind came only in puffs, and sometimes died away so entirely, that they were compelled to use the oars. At one place, they were so near the land, that they heard, or thought they heard, the roll of carriage-wheels, and the cracking of a whip. At length a longer and more vigorous puff of wind than usual carried them gallantly towards a bit of pebbly beach, that guided them for some distance by its whiteness. The sail was furled; and the prow of the boat grated upon the stones as it touched the shore.

The undertaking in which they were engaged had many chances of failure. If any travellers—not to speak of the Guardia Campana—happened to pass, their presence in that unusual place could not fail to attract attention; and those they waited for might be warned or defended. Walter began to regret that, in order to save the priest from suspicion, he had consented to this roundabout way of proceeding. Every one, he thought, should bear the responsibility of his own actions. At times, indeed, in the idleness of suspense, he debated whether it was not possible either that the padre was playing false from beginning to end, or that, suddenly fearing the consequences of what he was doing, he had resolved to obtain forgiveness by betrayal. As for Mr Buck, he was in high glee. He had taken his fowling-piece out of the boat, and had put a pistol in each pocket of his white trousers. As he paced up and down the road, he tried to give himself the attitude of a Calabrian brigand; and, in truth, felt quite lawless and desperate. He was aware that at that time, in most countries of the world, to stop a carriage on the highroad at night—no matter under what pretence—very much resembled a hanging matter. Walter also had armed himself: and the two lads in Mr Buck's employ, huddling near the mast, began to whisper to one another, and to discuss in what criminal affair they were about to be engaged against their will.

The road from Annunziata curved with the bay, but only at that point came quite down to the beach. After an interval that seemed considerable, two lights were seen coming slowly along.

'Here they are,' said Mr Buck, drawing a long breath, as if relieved from an immense weight. 'I did not like to say so before, but I really began to fear that we had arrived too late.'

Walter did not answer. The moon was shining on the road; and his eager eyes had distinguished the presence of a person on horseback moving near the carriage.

'They have a companion,' said he. 'I am now in for it; and Angela must go with us this night, even if there be bloodshed. I am sorry to have brought you into this business, my friend, which may prove a serious one.'

The only answer which Mr Buck made to this rather untimely observation, was contained in one word—'Bother!' The broad little man felt all the instincts of the bandit become suddenly developed in his breast.

At length the carriage drew nigh, and it was evident that a gentleman was accompanying it, and was acquainted with those within, for he sometimes approached the window to speak. It was Ascanio, the cousin of Angela, who had ridden all the way from Naples to see her. He still retained his old passion for her, though until now he had been ashamed to confess it. They told him of the death of Paolo; and he was exerting all his eloquence to dissuade Angela from retiring from the world, when Mr Buck, seizing the bridle of his horse, and forgetting many circumstances in his confusion, levelled a pistol at his head,

and in a tone which he remembered to have heard used amid the brilliant glare of a line of footlights, exclaimed:

'Your money, or your life! No, I don't mean that; but just gallop off, and leave the coast clear.'

Ascanio did not understand a word, but the action was unmistakable. He made an effort to disengage his bridle, and even gave Mr Buck a severe slash across the face with his whip. The stout Englishman uttered an exclamation of rage, and would probably have turned the adventure into a tragic one, had not Walter—who had hastened to the carriage-door, opened it, and handed out Angela, perfectly ready and agile, despite the feigned remonstrances of the priest, and the indignant exclamations of the princess—passed by and exclaimed:

'Let go, Buck. All is right.'

'My niece—my niece!' exclaimed the princess. 'Ascanio, save your cousin.'

The clear voice of Angela answered:

'It would be cruel to leave you both in despair. Farewell, aunt; farewell, cousin. I go with perfect good-will. Paolo lives!'

So saying, she allowed Walter to lift her into the boat, which had been already shoved off from the land. Ascanio, who felt that he was playing a rather ridiculous part, seized hold of a rope, and tried to bring Andrea to the rescue; but Mr Buck, remembering the slash he had received, struck him a smart blow over the fingers with a boat-hook. He let go, and had the mortification to see the cutter dart out into deep water, impelled vigorously by poles. Then the sail flapped; and taking the wind, the vessel glided rapidly away.

'Throw stones at them—throw stones!' cried the valiant Andrea from his seat. 'Oh if I had had time to get down!'

The princess first recovered her presence of mind.

'They cannot land anywhere without being tracked,' said she. 'We must take care that they do not leave the bay. To Castellamare, Ascanio; the commandant, Lucar, will best know what to do.'

Ascanio understood, and remounting his horse, he galloped, trembling with rage and mortification, along the road, whilst the old carriage followed rumbling in the rear.

About two hours afterwards, Walter, happening to look back towards the land, saw a bright flash from the shore, and presently heard the prolonged boom of a great gun.

'What is that?' said he to Mr Buck, who was sitting near Angela, as she lay dozing at the bottom of the boat, watching her with a sort of paternal solicitude.

'That, if I mistake not,' was the reply, 'is no other than a warning to the revenue-boats, at the entrance of the bay, to stop all outward-bound vessels until further orders. If so, the signal will be answered and repeated.'

And sure enough, before very long, all round the immense curve of coast, there were similar flashes, followed by similar sounds—each battery firing a single gun, from Sorrento even to Baia.

'They were leading the celebrated bandit Andrea Pisani, by the land-road to Naples to be shot,' said Mr Buck, grimly remembering how like a bandit he had just acted. 'He broke away, and got into a boat prepared by some accomplices at Torre del Greco. The guns were fired, and three hours afterwards he arrived at Naples by water instead of by land—that was all.'

Two or three flashes were seen at the same time towards the entrance of the bay, and before any sound reached their ears, Mr Buck had leisure to exclaim:

'The *Re Ferdinando* is answering the signal by a broadside, to tell that she is awake.'

A prolonged report came rolling past over the waters, and faint echoes murmured all round the shores of the bay. Then darkness and silence closed

in on all sides; and they sailed on until all the lights of Naples threw down their reflections like golden arrows into the waters ahead.

### ONE-SIDED LAW.

READERS of the London newspapers will have observed by the police reports, that an energetic effort has lately been made to put down 'betting-houses.' These establishments are usually public-houses in crowded neighbourhoods, the resort of what are called 'sporting characters,' who meet together for the purpose of drinking and betting on the result of horse-races. In Drury Lane, Long-Acre, and thereabouts, there are some well-known houses of this kind; and such is the popular mania for betting, that on the occasion of important races at Epsom, Ascot, and Newmarket, crowds collect about the doors, to await intelligence from the scene of action. At these times, the public-houses in question would be crammed to suffocation, but for the precautionary measure of charging sixpence for admission to the betting-room 'up stairs,' where the grand conclave, with betting-books before them, sit at the receipt of custom—that is, administering loss and disappointment on wonderfully easy terms to the silly gulls who venture within the precincts.

Of course, so gross and obvious a vice could not escape legislation. A recent act of parliament makes a dead-shot at betting-houses; and against such establishments, and the betting within them, as well as against public gambling in other forms, the police wages a constant war. Only a few days ago, an officer made a clean sweep of a betting-room connected with a public-house in Long-Acre, apprehending no fewer than 114 sporting characters, and lodging them in the court-room at Bow Street, to await the decision of magisterial justice. Few persons will object to the due execution of the law against betting; nor will much sympathy, we believe, be extended to the '114 sporting characters' aforesaid. But public indignation, in this as in similar instances, is necessarily much restrained by the consideration, that the law against betting-houses is one-sided; and is so in more senses than one. It seems tolerably plain, that betting on horse-races is a consequence of there being horse-races to bet upon; and that, therefore, the true way to put down the betting, is to put an end to the racing. The states of the realm, however, would not like to go this length. The members, in general, do not by any means object to racing, because it happens to be an entertainment of which they are themselves rather fond; and neither do they object to the genteel betting that goes on upon the spot, since they know that without this, racing would long since have been put down as a nuisance.

Surely we are warranted in thinking, that parliament did not come quite up to its wisdom in thus addressing itself to the business of mending popular manners, while it not only does not refrain from mending its own, but actually encourages the vice it pretends to condemn in others. On every recurrence of that annual saturnalia, the 'Derby Day,' we see Lords and Commons rushing from their posts, like a throng of school-boys, to indulge in the frolics of Epsom—to attract, by their presence, a promiscuous concourse to a spot on which the principal entertainment is betting—that is, winning and losing money by gambling. Nay, does not royalty itself, not only by its presence, but by the offer of purses and plate to be run for, invest horse-racing with a halo of respectability, and thereby seduce the humbler order of people into practices to be put down by the police? But is not horse-racing a respectable and useful amusement in itself, whatever be the vices with which sporting characters have surrounded it? Just about as useful and humane as was the practice of bear-baiting, which formed a courtly entertainment a few reigns

back, or was more recently, within the memory of men still living, the practice of cock-fighting not far from the royal mews. Everything has its day. We do not now care for bear and bull baiting, or cock-fighting, or boxing-matches; nor do many people go to enjoy the fun of rat-killing. Even pigeon-shooting is looked upon as a cruel 'sport'; and we shall probably live to hear considerably less bragging of the butcherly feat of killing so many hundred head of game in so many days. It is time that horse-racing should be resigned by the nobility and gentry, and left to die of its intrinsically vulgar reputation. Legislative acts might help it into the grave; but we are no admirers of plans for making people virtuous by act of parliament. In this country, example is almost above law; and 'the people,' prone to follow where fashion leads, would, we apprehend, soon vote horse-racing to be 'low,' and shun it accordingly, provided it met first with discouragement in high quarters. Let there be no 'good company' at Epsom or Ascot, and we should very shortly hear of there being no company at all. As to any benefit to the breed of horses by horse-racing, that must come under the category of vulgar errors. Nobody now cares a straw for excessive speed in horses. The locomotive, with a speed of forty miles an hour—fifty to sixty, if required—supersedes the fleetest horse, with the additional advantage of sparing all animal suffering. In this view of the matter, the railway is an instrument of humanity; and, like all other applications of mechanical science, the friend of social improvement. To talk of horse-races being useful, since the kind of horses which run such races are practically of no utility—a mere fanciful variety of the equine species, of value to nobody but 'black-legs'—is a little too absurd. At all events, as horse-racing is the acknowledged parent of betting, with its mean and villainous details of betting-houses, idleness, intemperance, and crime, one would expect that it should come in for a share of general contempt and execration. Legislative repression, of course, will not be thought of till only the poor require to be cared for. When no more dukes and lords rush to the Derby, then—and not till then—we shall have a law against 'the turf.' Meanwhile, any one of the hundred and fourteen unfortunates figuring at Bow Street might have sarcastically sung with Macheath:—

Since laws were made for every degree,  
To curb vice in others as well as in me;  
*I wonder we've not better company*  
At Tyburn tree!

#### A COSSACK OF THE DON.

AN intelligent young German, Herr Wagner, travelled lately among the Cossack tribes of Russia—sojourned, as a French critic expresses it, 'beneath the wide-spreading wings of the two-headed eagle.' He has published an account of his adventures in two very pleasant volumes, entitled *Der Kaukasus und das Land der Kosaken*. From it we translate the following episode:—

At one of his stations in the Crimea, Herr Wagner met and gradually became intimate with a major in the Cossack army, who wore on his breast the Order of St Anne, and spoke French with remarkable facility. One evening, while sitting together after dinner, their conversation turned on the manners and customs of the native tribes. 'If you wish,' said the major, 'to form a just idea of the Cossacks of the Don, do not be satisfied with viewing them in their capital city, but penetrate into the steppes of the south. There still exist specimens of the real original wild Cossacks, but in our town of Novo-Tcherkask you will find a degenerate population.'

On the left bank of the Don, he continued, are a great number of families who pass the winter in reed-

thatched cabins; but who, during the summer, encamp under tents, and are almost as thoroughly nomadic in their habits as their neighbours the Kalmucks. From one of these families was descended my maternal grandfather, Wassili Tguoff, surnamed the 'Devil of the Steppes.'

Although the tribes of the steppes formed a free commonwealth of soldiers, amongst whom formerly neither lords nor serfs were recognised, yet certain families were raised above the others, not by a patent of nobility, but by the honour which they had acquired in various encounters, by their alliances, and by the number of combatants whom they could bring to the field. Such was the family of my mother, the Tguoffs.

Frequently, without consulting their hetman, they attacked the Nogai Tatars, and were usually joined by a number of other Cossacks, attracted by the love of war and the hope of plunder. This family was believed to be under the special protection of the god of war, and it was thought that all their enterprises were certain to succeed. Emboldened by good-fortune, the Tguoffs continued to penetrate more deeply into the steppes. On one occasion, during winter, they advanced as far as Perekop, and were returning in triumph with a flock of fine sheep, when suddenly they found themselves assailed by a formidable host of Tatars, who were lying in wait. They were surrounded, and massacred. More than a hundred Tguoffs were slain; my grandfather alone escaping from the slaughter. He received a sabre-cut across the skull, which laid him senseless on the ground; his wounded horse fell on him, and by concealing him from his enemies, saved his life. The Tatars stripped their victims; cut off their heads, to be carried to the khan of Baktschi Sarai, who rewarded them liberally; and then went away. After some time my grandfather revived: he rose from his couch of snow, and recognising the body of his father, he managed to bury it, in order to save it from the teeth of the wolves, which already were approaching in droves. He then succeeded in catching a stray horse, which brought him back safely to his village.

Amongst the Cossacks, death is not accompanied by sombre mourning. When one of them falls bravely in battle, they do not weep or lament for him. We leave tears to the women, prayers to the priests; and when we have thrown a few shovelfuls of clay over the grave of our departed friend, we meet together to drink, smoke, and talk of his bravery and virtue. Thus were celebrated the funeral rites of the brave warriors whose terrible end Wassili Tguoff came to announce. By the death of his father and of his nearest relatives, he inherited a quantity of horses and oxen, considerable sums of money, and an ample supply of brandy. Crowds of Cossacks assembled around him, to hear the recital of the disaster from which he had so miraculously escaped, and to render homage to the memory of their companions by plentiful banquets and deep libations. While they were emptying his tuns of liquor, and devouring his roasted sheep, he lay stretched on his bed, suffering cruelly from his wound. In a few days, however, he rose up with fresh vigour, and summoned all his friends to follow him in a fierce expedition. At their head he entered one night a Tatar encampment, and destroyed every living soul within it, not sparing even the women, and carrying off the children transfixed on the points of their lances. Then Wassili led his friends to the place where his people had perished, disinterred the body of his father, and carried it to his *stanitza*, in order to celebrate the funeral rites afresh with libations of brandy. This occurred about the middle of the last century. My grandfather was then young, but already renowned for his intrepidity. He married three times, had thirteen sons and one daughter, who was my mother.

I wish I could describe to you his appearance as it

remains engraven on my memory. Fancy a broad-chested man of six feet high, with Herculean shoulders, a bronze-coloured visage, a thick beard falling on his breast, and large eyes, whose strange expression few could sustain unmoved; a head covered with thick curled hair, and surmounted by a fur-cap, adorned with a raven's feather. He used to ride a half-wild horse, whose mane nearly reached the ground; and he was universally proclaimed the best rider of the Don, and the most skilful manager of the sabre and the lance.

His numerous grandchildren felt for him respect, largely mingled with fear. Before the catastrophe which was so near ending fatally for him, he was gay, jovial, fond of singing and dancing; but after it he became taciturn and gloomy. He loved his grandchildren, especially myself, but his affection was manifested not by caresses, but by frequent presents.

Near my father's cabin he caused to be constructed on piles a more spacious habitation. In a niche in a recess in the principal room, he placed an image of the Virgin. It stood on a wooden pedestal, and was veiled by a silken curtain. Before it a lamp burned night and day, and around it were suspended crowns of flowers and various ornaments in gold and silver. My grandfather required that whoever came into his house, should pause and make the sign of the cross before his venerated niche; and after every meal, we children were commanded to do the same. Wo to him who should neglect doing so! I shall never forget the terror I felt one day, when my cousin Michael, a child of ten years old, while amusing himself with a sling, by chance hit the Virgin's pedestal with a stone. Our grandfather's countenance assumed a diabolical expression, his eyes sparkled, he gnashed his teeth, and seizing the boy by the hair, he dashed him outside the door. Some time afterwards, Michael was found drowned. Some of our family said it was a chastisement from God; others did not scruple to assert that my grandfather himself had thrown him into the water. He was certainly quite capable of doing it.

From that day, Wassili kept stretched across the room, in front of his altar, a cord, which no one was permitted to cross. He himself always trimmed the lamp. He had particular respect for a *moihille*,\* which stood at some distance from his dwelling. He planted a cross on it, and forbade us to approach it. Although this tumulus was covered with rich thick grass, his shepherds dared not let their sheep approach it. Wassili often went there, but always in the most gloomy weather. When the thunder rolled, and torrents of rain descended from black clouds, then we used to see him saddle his horse, wrap himself in his *bourka*, and hasten to his *moihille*. One of my cousins, Peter Tguroff, an especial favourite of his, wanted one day to see what attracted the old man towards this ancient place of sepulture, and nearly lost his life through his rash curiosity. Remarking one morning that our grandfather was preparing to set out, he went by stealth across the steppe, and hid himself amongst the thick grass, at the distance of a few paces from the mysterious mound. My grandfather soon arrived, rode round the tumulus, then ascended it, tied his horse to the cross on the top, and taking a hatchet from beneath his cloak, began to turn up the soil. Peter made some involuntary movement; my grandfather perceived him, and threw the hatchet at his head. The child happily avoided the blow, escaped at the top of his speed, and during more than a year dared not reappear before the terrible old man. From his recital, we conjectured that Wassili had treasures hidden within the Mongol tombs.

\* A species of tumulus, of which many are scattered along the steppes. They are attributed to the Mongols, who bury their dead in them. On opening them, earthen vases and rudely formed darts and hatchets have been found.

He followed Suwaroff in his campaigns against the Poles, and in each battle signalled himself by his impetuous bravery. When the Russians marched against the French in Italy and Germany, he was, by his age, exempt from serving. But when, in 1812, Napoleon crossed our frontiers, when the czar summoned all his subjects to the defence of their country, Wassili declared that he would go to the war. He committed his house to my mother's care; charged her especially not to allow any one to approach the holy image; and to keep the Virgin's lamp continually lighted.

He set out, accompanied by his thirteen sons and fifty of his grandsons, and joined the army of Kutsoff before the battle of Borodino. As he could neither read nor write, he could be enrolled only among the sub-officers; but our hetman, Platoff, gave him the command of a squadron. I served under him as a private soldier, although I had already made two campaigns, and attained the rank of lieutenant.

My grandfather was then ninety years old; yet he shewed all the vigour of a young man. While pursuing the French during their retreat, he bore without a murmur wind, cold, fatigues, and privations. To see the old man, his long lance in his hand, riding through a heavy snow-storm, you would have said that his muscles were covered with buffalo-skin.

In the morning, he used to rouse us all from the bivouac with a voice that sounded afar off like the roaring of a bull. The Tguroffs enrolled in his squadron used to assemble around him every night, and offer him the various spoils which they had taken from the enemy. Sometimes he divided these prizes equally amongst them; sometimes he reserved a portion for himself. He cared little for silver; but when he was presented with a few pieces of gold, he seized them with an eager hand, and a smile of satisfaction lighted up his face. To procure him this joy, we frequently risked our lives; for we loved him, wonderful old man that he was, and felt proud of pleasing him. In the commencement of the campaign, we used to slay without mercy all the French soldiers whom we found defenceless; but the czar having proclaimed that he would give a ducat for every prisoner brought to him alive, Wassili enjoined us to spare our captives, and we thus obtained many ducats.

Without suffering from the slightest illness, or receiving a single wound, he traversed Russia and Germany; but when we reached the banks of the Rhine, the sight of the river recalled to him his beloved Don. Although there certainly is not much resemblance between the smiling German stream and the dark river of the steppes, yet Wassili felt himself seized with a sudden home-sickness, and determined to return to his village. He found no difficulty in obtaining his discharge, and set out with two of his sons; while we went towards France. During this long expedition, he had lost six of his sons and fifteen of his grandsons. Some had fallen under the sabres of Murat's soldiers; others had died of fever in Germany.

Eight years afterwards, I returned to our stanitz, with a mutilated leg, and two decorations on my breast. Death had carried off my mother and several of my relatives; but the invincible Wassili yet lived, and I found him seated as usual in the chimney-corner, smoking his pipe and drinking his brandy. As formerly, he shut himself up every day with the image of the Virgin, and frequently rode to visit his *moihille*. When his sons married, he bestowed on each but a very small sum of money; yet we knew that, during his long life, he must have amassed considerable sums, and we frequently asked each other what he could have done with them.

One day he was present at the baptism of one of his great-grandchildren; all the members of our family and a number of friends were assembled. Just as the

priest was plunging the child into the water, Wassili uttered a terrific cry. The Virgin's lamp, forgotten that morning, had just gone out. Striking his hand on the wound which he had long ago received on the forehead, he fell on the ground, and in a few moments was dead. We immediately dismissed our guests, and, according to an ancient custom, opened all the windows. It was in December; the wind was blowing violently, and in one of its sudden gusts it caught the curtain that veiled the Virgin's statue, and overthrew the figure. While trying to replace it, we were surprised at its weight: it proved to be the treasury of our grandfather, and being hollow, contained a quantity of gold pieces. This discovery led us to visit the tumulus, where, on turning up the soil, we also found a considerable amount of specie.

I have now given you a description of my grandfather. The race of men of which he was the type is extinct among the Cossacks. Our hetman now inhabits a palace on the banks of the Neva, and is the hereditary grand-duke. The free proud Cossacks now resemble registered and disciplined conscripts. My grandfather never received more than a simple soldier's cross, while I wear the decoration of St Anne; but he was more respected than any major or colonel, and our brave Platoff held him in high esteem.

My son resembles me still less than I resemble my grandfather. Educated in the College of Cadets at St Petersburg, he wears an elegant uniform, cultivates a dainty moustache, and talks of balls, theatres, French novels, and champagne. From the history of my grandfather, from what you know of myself, and from the predilections of my young heir, you may form a correct idea of the past, present, and future of our Cossack tribes.

#### VIEWS OF LIFE FROM A FIXED STAND-POINT.

I AM not a philosopher. I know nothing of logic and metaphysics, and abstract sciences and speculations; I wasn't brought up to it, or else I might perhaps. But I see a good deal of human life and human nature, and other nature too, without being a philosopher; and there is many a story I could tell that is as well worth the telling, if I knew how to tell a story to purpose. I am an Omnibus Conductor, and the stand-point—I can't be very far wrong in calling it that, for I stand on it sixteen hours a day, and no sitting allowed—the stand-point from which I contemplate men and things is the 'monkey-board,' as it is called in the profession, at the tail of my 'bus. I consider that that's not by any means a disadvantageous position from which to regard my fellow-creatures: if not a very elevated one, it is sufficiently so to exalt me above the general level, and enables me to look over the heads as well as into the faces of all that section of mankind that comes in my way. I travel through six miles of city and suburbs, and I do it, there and back again, six times a day. If there is a great sameness in leading this sort of life—doing the same journey, one way and the other, four thousand times and more a year—there is also a great variety, taking into account the times and seasons, and changes in the aspect of the weather. Seven years' experience in the position I occupy, have enabled me to make some observations upon that portion of man and womankind that rides in omnibuses; and a very respectable class they are, upon the whole, though I say it that get my living by them. But it is a class that comprises a good many classes—an omnibus is everybody's coach-and-pair, and everybody gets into it that's tired of walking, or afraid of the wet, and has threepence or sixpence to spare; but notwithstanding that it belongs to everybody, it is curious to note how regularly it is monopolised by

certain people at certain hours of the day, days of the week, and weeks and months of the year. Thus, the first journey to town of a morning, all the year through, winter and summer, wet or dry, is the quickest journey of the whole day, because the 'bus carries a cargo of office-clerks, the old gentlemen inside pushing about their silver snuff-boxes and exchanging the news, and the young ones outside smoking cigars. The second journey is pretty much the same, with a mixture of masters and merchants, bankers, and so on, who are as regular as time itself; so that I see the same faces inside, and mostly sitting in the same places, about three hundred times in the course of the year at these morning-trips.

Now, I daresay any one of the gentlemen that gets out every morning at ten o'clock, or thereabouts, at the Bank, or within a quarter of a mile of it, would be taken aback a little if he knew how much I know of him—though it would do him no harm, for the matter of that. Only just look at one gentleman—for instance, Mr Philpotts—and mark what I know about him, though neither he nor anybody else ever told me a word of it intentionally. Mr Philpotts was born at Truro, in Cornwall; his father saved money in the pilchard-fishery, and articulated his son to a drysalter in Thames Street, with whom he did business forty years ago. Young Philpotts turned ship-broker when he attained his majority. The old man died, and left him his money, and he lost every penny of it in unwise speculations before he was thirty; and had to begin the world again, with a wife and two daughters—and nothing else. His wife's father, who was a wealthy cotton-spinner, got him a Manchester agency, and he had to put the screw on pretty tight to make both ends meet: he worked the screw so long, that he couldn't leave off working it when there was no longer any occasion for it; and he works it now as tight as ever—living in a two-storied cottage in a second-rate street, when he might live in a mansion, and riding in a 'bus when he might keep his own carriage. His two daughters are in danger of growing old maids, because he won't come down with a portion as long as he lives; and he has kept them in seclusion until their juvenile charms are vanishing. Philpotts has more money than he knows what to do with, and is deep in every well-paying speculation of the day; he is verging on sixty, and is rather fond of good living when it costs him nothing or not much—and is as likely to live ten or fifteen years longer as not. All this I learned concerning Mr Philpotts from the conversation of his companions chiefly during his own absence. Now, I never wanted to learn a word of it; and it doesn't concern me a morsel, though I do feel sorry for the young ladies that ought to have been married years ago. I could tell a tale almost equally particular with regard to nearly every one of the twelve gentlemen whom I pick up and drop down every morning, though they little think of it; and I have a notion there is not a single one of them who knows as much of the private history of either of the others as I do of that of the whole twelve.

After the purposes of business are served in the morning, come those of pleasure. I have a suspicion that more people ride for play than for work, judging from the fact, that during summer and fine weather my family is always larger than it is in the wet and wintry-days. Towards mid-day, the ladies begin to honour me with their company; if the sun shines fair, they are abroad shopping in multitudes, and I am continually taking up and setting down at the most splendid shops on my route the wives and daughters of the identical clerks, merchants, and gentlemen, who make up the cargoes of the morning. That younger Miss Philpotts, by the way, let me say, is not an old maid yet, if I'm anything of a judge: I set her down at the new bonnet-shop yesterday

afternoon, and she don't look as if she had seen seven-and-twenty yet.

The ladies, when they are mammas, are fond of taking the children a ride in the 'bus. Sometimes I get a whole family of children; the other night I had eleven young mothers, each with a baby in arms, and only one gentleman—twenty-three altogether, though we're only licensed to carry twelve. Summer afternoons and evenings are the children's holidays; not a week passes but I take out a dozen or two to the fields, and bring them back again at sundown, loaded with butter-cups, cowslips, daisies, or May-blossom, which makes me feel like a nosegay all the way to the Strand. My 'bus is always pretty full as business-hours draw to a close. There are people going out in the suburbs to spend the evening; there are more going home to dinner, or it may be an early tea; there are people going into the City to theatre or concert—so that, travel which way I will, I mostly travel full of an evening. If I'm not full before I get so far as the railway station, I'm sure to fill there, especially in excursion-times, when the train is just come in. If you was to look into my 'bus then, you wouldn't know it for the same—twelve people up to their chins in egg-baskets, boxes, carpet-bags, and packages, look so different from twelve city gentlemen, with nothing bigger than a snuff-box apiece. Poor Mr Philpotts hailed me the other night when I was full of excursioners, and would have had to ride outside if a civil young fellow hadn't offered to turn on to the roof, to make room for him. It was odd, I thought, that after old P. had got out, and turned up the lane to his cottage, the young fellow got down and joined the younger Miss P. not a hundred yards further on—but, of course, that was no business of mine.

People talk, and write, too, sometimes, about the influence of the weather and the state of the atmosphere upon people's nervous systems. I don't profess to understand nervous systems myself, but I know, from pretty good experience, that wet weather is very trying to the temper, not to mention the rheumatism. It's mostly gentlemen that ride in rainy seasons; and the few ladies that get into my 'bus, do so because they can't help themselves, and must go the distance. Politeness, I have observed, like many other things that are more for ornament than use, is very much damaged by moisture: civility, which is all we conductors pretend to, is a much tougher article, and more waterproof, though it won't keep out the rain any more than the other. Rain is a wonderful damper to sociability as well as to broadcloth: when the water is dropping from people's clothes, conversation drops too; and as for a joke, it isn't always safe to venture upon one in the wet, because when folks are dripping, they won't stand roasting—which, of course, is natural enough. There's a prodigious rush sometimes of a splashy night to catch the last 'bus; and then it is that your model-gentleman stands at one side, and lets others be accommodated before he takes thought for himself—though I've never had the pleasure of being introduced to that gentleman yet.

It came down dismally this morning, more like a water-spout than a storm of rain. We pulled up as usual at Grinder Lane for Mr Philpotts, but he never came. I thought it was the foul weather kept him at home. It wasn't though, as I found out before we'd gone a mile further. It's a fact that the young fellow that was so civil to him the other night, has bolted off with the younger Miss Philpotts, and married her clean out. He's a lawyer, they say, and in doing business for the father, has found out that the Misses P. have each fortunes in their own right, inherited from their mother's father, of which the old gentleman has the management. Young Circuit has taken his choice of the two; and now the thing has got wind, it is thought the other will go by hook or by crook, in spite of all the unwilling

father can do to prevent it—and very proper too. I shall look out for the old gentleman when he has got over the surprise, and see how he bears it.

#### THE CRYSTAL PALACE OF WIELICZKA.

WHEN Russia, Austria, and Prussia were dividing Poland among them, there was one plum in the share that fell to Austria which the others could not behold without envy, and part of which they therefore secured to themselves. This plum was the Crystal Palace of Wieliczka; for Poland had her Crystal Palace hundreds of years before London dreamt of hers, and which, although the industry of the world was never represented within its precincts, is nevertheless a noble trophy of Polish industry, and presents many points of interest to the historian, the philosopher, and the statistician. Several of the crowned heads of Europe have honoured it with their presence, and one of the most famous generals of modern times has dated dispatches from within its walls. Grand as were the dimensions of our Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, and grander still as are those of its more beautiful sister on Sydenham Hill, they dwindle into utter insignificance when compared with the extent of the Crystal Palace of Wieliczka, with its suites of vast and lofty halls, its vaulted chapels, its long range of spacious galleries, the quiet lakes spread like mirrors within its walls, and its deep, dark, mysterious museums of natural wonders.

But some of our readers who happen never before to have heard of this Crystal Palace, are perhaps already indulging in suspicions of a poetic fiction; and we may therefore as well convince them at once that we are speaking of a reality, by mentioning, that we are alluding to the salt-mines which nature has deposited at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, and in which the hand of man has scooped out a palace such as we have described.

Not in a tub, or a basket, or clinging to a rope, like one of a huge swarm of bees—as is the usual mode of ingress into mines—is the favoured traveller admitted into this subterranean fairy palace. To make the descent easy, broad flights of steps have been cut through the superincumbent strata of marl, clay, sand, far into the depths of that mineral that gives its savour to the earth. It seems, indeed, like desecration to enter in any less dignified way this wonderful labyrinth of crystal halls, one hundred of which measure from 100 to 150 feet in height, and from 80 to 100 feet in length and breadth, each having its peculiar name, derived from some event connected with the mines, or from some Polish king or Austrian emperor who may have honoured the place with his presence, or from some Catholic saint who may have been an especial favourite with the miners. Some of these chambers of the deep have, indeed, been especially devoted to religious worship; others to the worship of the muses of dancing and of music, being set aside as ball-rooms and concert-rooms; and others, again, are used as stables for horses, the inequalities of the upper world having thus found their way down into this subterranean world also. The largest of these salt-chapels is dedicated to St Anthony, to whose kind intercession, tradition says, the country is indebted for the discovery of the salt-mines. A sister of St Casimir—so goes the story—lost a precious ring, and in her dismay, prayed to St Anthony to help her to find it. The complaisant saint, though refusing to help to restore to the lady a mere token of earthly vanity, appeared to her in a dream, and designating to her the spot where the mines were discovered, told her that by digging there, she would find a treasure greater than the one she had lost. The chapel of St Anthony, however, was not built, or rather excavated, until 1698, from which period, until the reign of Joseph II., a mass

was said here every morning for the miners. At present, divine worship is celebrated in the chapel only once a year, on the 3d of July—a great festival among the miners, who, clad in holiday attire, attend the mass, and then dine together at long tables spread in some of the adjoining halls. In this Gothic chapel, as well as in the smaller ones in the mines, not only the walls, the doors, the niches, are hewn out in salt, but so likewise are the altar and the crucifix in front of it, the statues of the saints, as large as life, that grace the niches and kneel around the altar, and even the little lamps, of antique form, that burn before their shrines.

The grandest of these crystal halls is, however, the ball-room, adorned with slender columns with ornamented capitals, with friezes of sculptured foliage, and with a chandelier formed of salt-crystals, sixty feet in circumference. In this hall are given the fêtes which, on occasion of the presence of emperor or king, have made these subterranean regions resound with the music and the mirth of the children of the earth—no doubt much to the disgust of the elfin sprites who reigned as sole masters here, until busy bustling man ferreted out the secret riches of their realm. The effect produced when the hundreds of lights in the chandeliers are reflected from the myriads of saline gems which form the walls, ceiling, and floor of these halls, is wondrously beautiful; and the fête given here to King Augustus II. of Poland, in particular, is described as surpassing in splendour and magnificence anything ever witnessed in the richest stone-built palaces on the surface of the earth. Among the sculptured works of salt that adorn the various chambers, a trophy formed of all the tools and instruments used in the mine, is particularly interesting; but the work of most artistic value is a statue of King John Sigismund of Poland, cut out of a single block of crystal. In the stables for the horses, that spend their lives in this glittering palace, the boxes, mangers, and troughs are all cut out of salt; and the very air you breathe is impregnated with the mineral. But however monotonous this realm of salt may seem to some, to others it has strange attractions; and the eccentric Suwarrow, for instance, on one occasion established his headquarters here during three days, dictating dispatches to secretaries, writing on blocks of salt, and directing the movements of troops in the world above by means of adjutants hoisted up and down through darksome shafts.

Like the colonists in Australia, who for years wandered over gold-fields without noticing the glittering treasures at their feet, the various tribes who by turns inhabited the Carpathians, for centuries drew from distant sources scanty supplies of that salt which is as essential to barbarous as to refined nature, while, 100 feet beneath the soil they were treading, lay supplies of this wholesome mineral, sufficient for the world's consumption; for although it is only in Bochnia and Wieliczka, in the immediate neighbourhood of Cracow, that extensive mines have been opened, there is every reason to believe that the salt-fields, of which these form part, extend in one continuous bed below the whole range of the Carpathians, and through Transylvania and Moldavia, because, wherever mines have been worked in these regions, it has been found that not only are the crystals of exactly the same structure, and the salt of the same qualities, but that the superincumbent strata of rock and earth follow each other in the same order. The precise date of the discovery of the Wieliczka Mines is not known; the first mention of them in the annals of Poland occurs as early as the year 1237; but even then they are not alluded to as a new discovery, but as an established enterprise. The first working of the veins was in accordance with the rudeness of the times; and the yield, no doubt, remained insignificant, until the establishment of regular mining enterprise, in the middle of the

fifteenth century; but even after this period, the amount of salt extracted bore no proportion to the inexhaustible richness of the mines; for these were farmed out to ignorant Jews, who worked them by means of unskilled Polish labourers, and who, being merely intent upon enriching themselves, took no heed as to whether or not the excavations were carried on so as to impede the labours of their successors. At the period of the partition of Poland in 1772, the mines were, however, considered of sufficient importance, to induce Russia and Prussia to introduce an article into the treaty of partition, stipulating for a certain share in the produce; and of the 900,000 hundredweights of salt at present produced annually in Bochnia and Wieliczka, Austria, in compliance with this article, cedes 200,000 hundredweights to Prussia, and 150,000 hundredweights to Russia. However, even the 900,000 hundredweights extracted annually, by no means give the measure of the productive power of the Wieliczka Mines, which are at present worked upon the highest scientific principles, under the superintendence of mining-engineers educated for the purpose, at the academy of Chemnitz, in Hungary; but the Austrian government has reserved to itself the monopoly of the salt-trade, and consequently takes care to regulate the production according to what it considers its own interests. On an average, the salt is sold by the government at five guilder the hundredweight, but the expenses of production are kept strictly secret; however, the general opinion at the mines is, that the government realises no less than 400 per cent. profit, and thus derives from these mines an annual net revenue of 2,200,000 gulden; an amount considerably exceeding the revenues of the whole kingdom of Lodomeria. So anxious is the Austrian government that none but itself shall enjoy the advantages to be derived from these rich mines, that the miners are searched every evening before leaving the works, lest they should carry away with them some of the precious mineral, beyond the fifteen pounds a year allowed them in addition to their wages; and the water pumped up from the mine is conveyed through a subterranean pipe into the Vistula, 600 pails of rich brine being daily wasted in this way.

The works at present extend over an area of 35,000 square fathoms, the length of the galleries and passages making together seven and a half German miles (about thirty-seven English miles). They consist of three divisions, or 'fields,' as they are termed in the technical language, corresponding to the three epochs in the history of the mining enterprise. The 'Old Field' comprises the first irregular pits sunk; the 'Janina Field,' called after King John of Poland, comprises the improved works, dating from the fifteenth century; and the 'New Field' comprises the works commenced under Austrian superintendence, and carried on according to the most advanced principles of mining science. These fields consist of five stories, or 'contignations,' as they are called in Galicia, the one below the other, and each comprising vast ranges of chambers, communicating with each other by numerous horizontal galleries or 'levels;' while the various contignations communicate by means of perpendicular and oblique shafts, besides the staircases already mentioned. The first contignation is 34 fathoms below the surface, the lowest 145 fathoms, intervals of 10 or 15 fathoms being left between each story; and the lowest level of the mines is thus 300 feet below that of the sea, and 580 feet below the bed of the Vistula. Lower, it is considered dangerous to proceed, on account of the salt-springs that gush forth when the salt is excavated at a greater depth. The first traces of salt are discovered at a depth of about fifteen fathoms below the surface, where it appears in 'bunches' of various dimensions imbedded in the clay. Here and there, also, it appears already at this depth in very thin veins, which are not, however, worked. The deeper one descends into the bed

of clay impregnated with the salt, the larger become the masses of the latter. At first, they measure from 5, 10, to 15 feet in diameter, and subsequently reach as much as 50 and 100 feet; but not until a depth of 500 feet below the surface is reached does the salt appear in regular beds; the masses already alluded to above forming, on the contrary, immense cubes, lying heaped up in all directions and in all positions. The lowest beds do not occupy a horizontal position, but incline at an angle of 35 degrees southwards, towards the Carpathians. Some of the beds are indeed quite perpendicular, forming, as it were, great walls of salt. In some places, the beds are only 20 to 30 feet thick; in others, from 70 to 100 feet. The quality of the salt varies with its place of deposit. That nearest the surface, and sparingly intermixed with the clay, is called *blotnik*, or 'dirt-salt,' and is used only for building purposes in the mines, or when sold for cattle; that forming the large cubiform masses, is called green salt, and is the most important, from the commercial point of view; that occupying the lowest position, and found in regular beds, is called *szybikowa* salt, and is the finest in quality. Intermixed with the other salts, are also found blocks of crystal-salt, or *sal gemma*, as it is termed in science, which is so precious, that it was formerly reserved exclusively for the kings of Poland, who used to make presents of it to persons on whom they wished to bestow a favour. Even at this day, it is deemed a rarity fit 'to set before a king;' and 2 hundredweights are yearly set aside for the king of Prussia; 2½ hundredweights for the emperor of Russia, as such, and 2 hundredweights as king of Poland; while the emperor of Austria, as such, receives 3 hundredweights, and as king of Hungary, 1 hundredweight yearly. The statue of King John Sigismund, before alluded to, is hewn out of the largest block of this crystal ever extracted from the mines. In general, the blocks are not much above one cubic foot in size; and various little articles and toys are carved out of them, and sold at the mines. Sometimes, also, this crystal is found in plates of such faultless purity, that they equal the finest plate-glass, and attempts have been made to convert them into mirrors. The green salt consists of many small salt-crystals, so firmly incorporated with each other, as to present to the eye a substance as clear and transparent as common green bottle-glass. It varies much in quality, according to the composition of the crystals; but to enumerate and describe its various subdivisions, would occupy too much of our space. The finest quality, as before said, is called *szybikowa* salt. This is not so dark in colour as the common green salt, and is even more compact.

Where the salt occurs in large masses, the miners prepare, with chisel and pick, a perpendicular surface or wall, in the chamber in which they are working, rendering it smooth and uniform to a height of about twenty feet. Such a surface is called a *mirror*, and along the whole face of this mirror are then cut narrow grooves or furrows of 20 or 30 inches in depth, and at intervals of three feet from each other. By means of these grooves, a number of small iron wedges are then introduced on each side of the strips marked off; and the wedges being all raised at once, the huge mass of salt is thus loosened from the wall, but remains standing until thrown down by main force. In the fall, the salt-pillars of course break into fragments, and these are subsequently cut on the spot into different forms, according to their size. It is calculated that 400 cubic fathoms of rock give 100,000 hundredweights of salt; and the annual yield in Wieliczka being on an average 700,000 hundredweights, an additional space of 2800 cubic fathoms, or a chamber measuring 80 feet in height, length, and breadth, is added every year to the mines. By means of these numbers, it has further been calculated that, supposing the mines to have been worked to this extent for 400 years, they have furnished a sufficient

quantity of salt for the consumption of 300,000,000 of human beings, allowing 10 pounds of salt for each person; and if each hundredweight be rated at three gulden, according to the present value of money, they have caused a circulation of 300,000,000 of gulden. Such, indeed, is the number of pits, chambers, galleries, passages, cross-cuts, shafts, &c., opened during the 600 years that the mines are supposed to have been worked, and such the carelessness with which the works were conducted for a length of time, that no clue at present exists to part of the older fields; and the mining officials of Wieliczka are acquainted only with certain divisions of this great subterranean labyrinth.

Among the peculiarities of the Wieliczka Mines is, that although they hold in their depths about twenty small lakes, each several hundred feet long, and from eighteen to twenty-four feet deep, there is a total absence of that moisture and slushiness which render mines in general so disagreeable. No water here trickles from the walls, gathering in pools around the workmen's feet; the greatest cleanliness and neatness reign throughout the subterranean chambers; and although pools of water are sometimes discovered in some little cavity, they are speedily and quietly drained off, so as to create no discomfort. Fresh water from the upper regions, however, flows in pipes through the various chambers and passages for the use of the miners as well as the horses, which do not, like the former, return to the regions of fresh air and water when the labours of the day are over. The air in these mines is exceedingly dry, as is proved to demonstration by the sculptured works of salt which have stood there for centuries without having suffered any sensible deterioration; but although dry, the air is by no means stagnant, for rapid currents circulate through all the galleries and passages, and at some points, from causes unknown, increase to quite a tempestuous wind. In the year 1745, a most extraordinary whirlwind, caused by the falling in of the roof of a great cavern, created the utmost consternation in the mines. The condensed air escaping from this veritable cave of *Æolus*, shot through the galleries, upset the labourers found on its passage, carried away their tools, broke down pillars and doorways, and finally rushed up one of the perpendicular shafts, destroying in its exit the building that covered the mouth of the shaft. The deleterious gases that often prove so fatal in coal, copper, silver, and other mines, are, however, unknown in the Wieliczka Mines; and, indeed, as a general rule, the masses of salt are so closely packed, as to leave no room for their development. At long intervals, a species of combustible hydrogen gas, denominated *saletar* by the Poles, makes its appearance; but it generally burns out without causing any explosion. The miners of Wieliczka are not, therefore, exposed to the dreadful accidents which so often spread desolation through our colliery districts; but their health suffers, in some measure, from the inspiration of the fine particles of salt that float upon the air, and which act injuriously on the lungs. Upon the whole, however, they attain a fair average age, and among them are many who have worked as long as forty years in the mines. Upon dead bodies, the air of the salt-mines acts as a natural preserver; so much so, indeed, that had the Egyptians possessed such mines, they need not have gone to the expense and trouble of making mummies of their dead; at least, the carcasses of horses that have died in the works at Wieliczka have been found, after the lapse of many years, in a state of perfect preservation.

At a future period, many a still unknown secret of nature will, no doubt, be revealed by a study of the salt-mines of Wieliczka; but hitherto the Austrian government has guarded, with a jealousy difficult to account for, not only the secrets connected with the working and administration of the mines, but even the geological facts relating to them. A glimpse of the

many interesting subjects for speculation offered by the mines may, however, be obtained in the museum formed on the spot, containing various objects found in them, such as shells of divers kinds, shewing that the ocean from whose waters these immense deposits of salt were precipitated, was already inhabited by animals similar to those that at present strew our sea-beaches; and charred and petrified trunks of trees, proving that the neighbouring lands were already clad with verdure. But the task we had set ourselves was to describe the Crystal Palace of Wieliczka, not the events that preceded the formation of the materials of which it is built—speculations upon these we leave to others more likely to work them to a profitable issue.

## RAILWAYS IN RUSSIA.

The carriage allotted for my special use was about ten feet square; it was furnished with two sofas and chairs, a small card-table, and two side-tables. On the sofas I could have reclined at full length—a convenience very desirable, and generally denied us on English railways: the sofas and chairs had air-cushions, and were very comfortable. I looked into several first and second class carriages, and they all appeared nicely fitted up, although not like the one assigned to me: the second-class carriages had seats and cushions superior to those of the first-class on English railways, and afforded plenty of room to each individual, allowing of his sitting without cramping his knees upon those of the person opposite to him. We left Moscow at eleven o'clock precisely; Mr Sharman, my servant, and myself, occupying this little room to ourselves; our luggage was stowed away in another carriage. . . . I was pleased to perceive that there was no unnecessary hurry in the railway movements, such as those which annoy the English traveller: plenty of time was allowed at every station to the passengers to take their meals, and in each there was all that could be required in the way of refreshments. The time allowed for the train to pass from one station to another is carefully fixed for the driver, who dare not arrive a minute sooner or later; so that in some cases we had to go very slowly, in order not to arrive before the time. This, however, is not unpleasant, as people on the continent do not give way to that nervous hurry which fidgets us and shortens our lives. Who in England has time to look around him? Rich and poor seem to be urged along by an impetus which prevents their thinking of anything except of their next appointment; and as soon as that is kept, their thoughts fly to the next.—*Royer's English Prisoners in Russia.*

## RUB SOFTLY.

'Tis all very well,' said my godfather, putting in his oar—'tis all very well, that rubbing down and polishing off, provided 'tis done in moderation; but let me tell you, there is such a thing as *rubbing too hard*. I have seen an American Indian rubbing two pieces of rough wood together; after a little time, they became a great deal smoother, and had a pleasant warm feel; but when he rubbed away some time longer, they took fire, blazed up, and crackled, and sputtered in all directions. Now, 'tis just the same thing, I suspect, in married life. Rub quietly, and only a little at a time, and all will go on smoothly; but if you stick to it, hard and fast, from morning to night, take my word for it, you will kindle up a blaze at last that you may not find it easy to put out.'—*Dublin University Magazine.*

## THE TURKISH COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

As there are no liberal professions in Turkey, except the public functions, the class of proprietors is the only one which represents our middle classes, and this is gradually dying away. The Turkish gentleman, who lives on his property, either resides on his farm in the country or in a town-house. In the first, he manages his estate, attends to his house, and exercises hospitality; in the other, the education of his children, prayers, alms, and the enjoyment of the kef employs all his time. But he unites with this native indolence and reserve, a dignity, a nobility of feeling, an affection for his children, kindness to his servants and

slaves, and a delicacy in his treatment of the harem, which are truly admirable. He is proud, though without the slightest admixture of vanity, more especially of his religion. He believes that the empire is hurriedly approaching to its end; and if he be rich, he desires that he may be buried in Asia, in the great cemetery of Scutari, in order that the presence of the infidels may not sully the asylum where his bones rest, whenever the Turks have lost Stamboul. He believes in the impossibility of any regeneration of Turkey, and is consequently, as far as his apathy will permit him, a bigoted opponent of reform.—*Sir George Larpent's Turkey.*

## OCTOBER.

It is no joy to me to sit

On dreamy summer eves,  
When from her broad bright shield the moon  
Darts arrows through the leaves,  
And all things through the quiet land  
Rest, love—but nothing grieves.  
Better I like old Autumn,  
With hair tossed to and fro,  
Firm striding o'er the stubble-fields,  
When the equinoctials blow.

When timidly the sun creeps up  
Through misty mornings cold,  
And Robin on the orchard-hedge  
Sings cheerily and bold,  
While heavily the frosted plum  
Drops downward on the mould.  
And as he passes, Autumn  
Into Earth's lap does throw  
Brown apples gay in a game of play,  
When the equinoctials blow.

When the young year his carol sinks  
Into a patient psalm,  
Craves no more for the honey-cup  
But for the cup of balm,  
And all his storms and sunshine bursts  
Controls to one brave calm.  
While step by step walks Autumn,  
With steady eye, that shew  
Nor grief nor fear, to the death of the year,  
When the equinoctials blow.

## NO MORE RANCID BUTTER.

Wild recommends that the butter should be kneaded with fresh milk, and then with pure water. He states, that by this treatment, the butter is rendered as fresh and pure in flavour as when recently made. He ascribes this result to the fact, that butyric acid, to which the rancid odour and taste are owing, is readily soluble in fresh milk, and is then removed.—*Journal of Industrial Progress.*

## PICTURE SALE AT BIRMINGHAM.

In No. 47, we mentioned, in reference to a notice in a former Number, of a sale of supposed spurious pictures at Birmingham, that the auctioneers implicated—but whose names were not mentioned by us—had brought an action against our authority, *The Art Journal*. Since then, Mr Hall of *The Art Journal* has disclaimed in a public advertisement any intention to cast injurious reflections upon Messrs Ludlow and Robinson; adding—'I have no doubt whatever that they did not lend their aid to any deceit, and that the character they have so long and so honourably borne in Birmingham, supply ample proof that they are incapable of any wrong act in their professional dealings.'

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